(c) if so, the reaction of the Government to the proposal for Itchampalli project; and

(d) whether this project will help to ease the flood problem in the flood prone districts of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA) (a) to (d) The States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are required to jointly survey, plan and formulate the report and execute the Itchampalli multi-purpose project. The suggestion dated 27-9-1990 received from the State Yuva Janata Dal has been brought to the notice of the State Government

Clearance for afforestation

671. SHRI E. BALANANDAN. Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state·

(a) whether it is a fact that clearance from the Forest Department for Pooyamkutty Hydel Project in Kerala is yet to be given in spite of the fact that Kerala Government has fulfilled the demand of the Forest Department for alternative sites for afforestation; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for delay in clearance of Pooyamkutty Hydel Project in Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) The proposal of the State Government of Kerala for diversion of 300 1 8 ha. of forest land for construction of Pooyamkutty Hydro-Electric Project Stage-I is under process for decision.

Committee to Review Cabotage Law

672 SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE. Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state·

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government has set-up a Committee to review the CABOTAGE LAW;

(b) whether the said Committee has recommended exemption of Madras and Jawaharlal Nehru Ports from the restrictions under Section 407 and 408 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958,

(c) whether Cochin Port Trade Union Action Council Cochin has urged for granting exemption to Cochin Port from the said restrictions; and

(d) if so, the decision taken by Government on the request for exemption of Cochin Port?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) A Committee was set up.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) The representation of Cochin Port Trade Union Action Council was considered. The Council has requested relaxation of Cabotage Laws in respect of the Container Transhipment Terminal at Cochin. The Container Transhipment Terminal at Cochin Port has been proposed to be included in VIII Plan which is yet not finalised. Therefore, the question of such an exemption does not arise.

Pay Scale of Scientific Assistant, Botanical Survey of India

673. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state

(a) whether the legal opinion sought by the Botanical Survey of India Employees' Asociation, Calcutta with regard to the interpretation and implementation of the judgement of the Central Administrative Tribunal on the question of allocation of pay scale of Rs. 550—900 to the post of Scientific Assistant, Botanical Survey of India, is under consideration of Government as promised vide Do No.

2/27/84-CSB (Vol III)-770/M dated the 6th September, 1990 by the former Minister of Environment and Forests,

(b) whether legal opinion in the matter has been sought by Government, if so, details of the opinion, and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. According to the legal opinion obtained, the benefit of the judgements of the Supreme Court and Central Administrative Tribunal, Calcutta, Bench, should be given to the existing Scientific Assistants, and not to those who have already retired or been promoted and the pay scale of Rs. 550—900 (Pre-revised) allocated to the existing Scientific Assistants will be personal to them

(c) The Government have already issued necessary orders for allocation of pay scale of Rs. 550—900 Per-revised) to the existing Scientific Assistants

Memorandum from All India Postal Employees Union, Sundergarh Divisional Branch, Orissa

674. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether a Memorandum dated 10th September, 1990 has been received by him from All India Postal Employees' Union, Postmen, Group 'D' and EDAs, Sundergarh Divisional Branch, Rourkela, Orissa,

(b) if so, what are the details of the Memorandum, and

(c) the nature of concrete steps taken or proposed to be taken on each of the problems?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PRAKASH) (a) Does not seem to have been received.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Attacks on Hindu Temples in Pakistan

675. SHRI JITENDRABHAI LABHSHANKER BHATT Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state.

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that a crowd, angry at the alleged desecration of a mosque in India, attacked Hindu temples and shops in the Pakistani city of Sukkur in November, 1990 and set fire to cars;

(b) whether any protest has been lodged with the Government of Pakistan in this regard,

(c) if so, what is Pakistan's response thereto, and

(d) if the reply to part (b) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) Government have seen media reports to this effect.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Government are of the view that in terms of the Shimla Agreement neither India nor Pakistan should interfere in each other's internal affairs.

India's initiative on resolution of the Gulf Crisis

676 SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any initiative as a leading member of NAM to resolve the Gulf crisis; and